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Contributions to the Origins of the *Noli me tangere* Motif*

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Abstract: *In this essay, we will examine the complex genesis of the* Noli me tangere *motif in Western Art. The origins and the history of its iconographic development are considered against the background of Church history, spirituality and cult formation. These contexts supplied the mechanisms which determined the earliest form of the* Noli me tangere *motif in the visual arts. It will become clear that the* Noli me tangere *iconography was not as such disseminated in Early Christian art. As part of a true iconographical tradition, the theme became first developed in Carolingian art, but grew only into a full blossoming tradition from the Ottonian period onwards. This article tries to formulate the possible reasons and factors for this particular development.*

Keywords: *Mary Magdalene, Noli me tangere, Carolingian art, Ottonian miniatures, Origins of a motif*

The distance between a time of the word and a time of the image can be very far indeed.

(John Morton)[1]

Introduction

The *Noli me tangere* is a many-sided motif in the visual arts. From the Carolingian period onward – that is, from around the 9th century – the theme began to attract increasing interest in the visual arts. Sculptors, miniaturists and painters created compelling responses to the fascinating encounter between Mary Magdalene and Christ as described in John 20:11-18. Art history – and iconology in particular – investigates the mechanisms which accompany the translation of word into image in a historical context. These mechanisms are determined by formal as well as contextual factors. In terms of the first group, the representation of the *Noli me tangere* is subject to the stylistic preferences of an individual, workshop or artistic period. With respect to the second group, the depiction of the *Noli me tangere* is influenced by prevailing interpretations of the theme. It is possible to describe a relationship between artistic interest in the theme and the degree to which it attracted attention in contemporary sermons, exegetical interpretations, devotional practice and its socio-religious context[2].

This essay attempts to locate the very genesis of the *Noli me tangere* motif. A study of the origins of this iconography has long been needed[3], and confronts the earliest depictions of the *Noli me tangere* with literary and cultural history for the first time. Is its integration into contemporary literary commentaries discernible? Do the stylistic and chronological shifts observed in the iconographic corpus correspond to the exegetical and spiritual development of the figure of Mary Magdalene in general and the *Noli me tangere* motif in particular?

Word, image and interpretation. The Noli me tangere and its significance during the Early Middle Ages

The present essay was preceded by an investigation into the compilation of the *Noli me tangere* corpus. Which representations of the theme – which occurs from early Christian times onward – can be considered 'irrefutable' depictions of the injunction against touch expressed in John 20? Answering this question is no easy task, and for three reasons.

First, there is a certain degree of iconographic confusion between the *Noli me tangere* and the *Haemorrhoissa* of Mark 5:28-31 and Luke 8:46. In the past, scholars have identified representations of the bleeding woman, who touches the hem of Christ's mantle in the hope of being cured, as a *Noli me tangere*. These are typically very early examples, such as those

1. Rome, Catacomb of Petrus and Marcellinus, 3rd century, Christ and the Haemorrhoissa, *mural painting.*

2. Brescia, Museo Civico, ca. 360-370, Christ and the Haemorrhoissa, *Lipsanotheca, ivory (detail).*

found in the catacombs of Petrus and Marcellinus in Rome (3rd century) (fig. 1)[4] and on an ivory lipsanotheca from Brescia (4th century) (fig. 2)[5]. The confusion arose because both motifs seem at first glance to employ the same gestural language. Nevertheless, thorough analysis reveals that, in many cases, the *Haemorrhoissa* actually touches the hem of Christ's mantle[6].

Striking in this respect is that patristic texts also make the connection between the *Haemorrhoissa* and the *Noli me tangere*. The Fathers of the Church recognized an analogy between the two women (see below). Whatever the case may be, careful identification has now succeeded in weeding out the 'false' *Noli me tangere*'s in Early Christian and proto-Carolingian art.

A second set of problems encountered in compiling the *Noli me tangere* corpus is that the encounter between Christ and a single Mary (Magdalene) does not occur before 850. Before the middle of the 9th century, the story of the Resurrection was depicted by showing the myrrhophores near the tomb, on the one hand[7], and/or Christ's appearance to two myrrhophores, the *Chairete* on the other[8]. The essential question is thus whether or not the particular passage in John was initially suppressed, and why. Lisa Marie Rafanelli is of the opinion that the passage was deliberately neglected in the visual arts. Nevertheless, the myrrhophores and the *Chairete* would ultimately provide the basic characteristics of later *Noli me tangere* iconography.

The third and final consideration is that the *Noli me tangere* iconography was brought forth in the heart of the Carolingian renaissance, and that interest in the theme increased from the Ottonian period onward, or from ca. 1000. In what follows, we will examine the cultural impulses which form the basis for the genesis of the *Noli me tangere* and the increasing fascination it exerted over the artists of the periods in question. To do so, it is first necessary to examine the patristic, artistic and religious situations in which the *Noli me tangere* came into existence.

1. The patristic situation (4th-7th centuries)

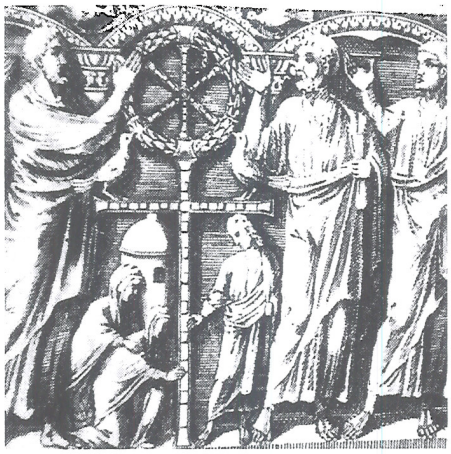
Recently, the results of an investigation into the commentaries on John 20:17 in Latin patristics were published[9]. In the first place, John 20:17 aroused the interest of the church fathers as a subsidiary motif in the problem of the Resurrection. It was necessary to explain certain inconsistencies, such as the relationship between the touching of the feet by the *Chairete*, the exact identity of the Mary in John 20:17 with respect to the other Gospels, and the contrast between her action and Thomas's touching of Christ in John 20:24-29.

Ambrose of Milan († 397) adheres to the notion of two different Mary Magdalenes in his *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam* (cap. 10)[10].The first, in Matthew 28, may touch Christ's feet because, unlike the Mary in John 20, she possesses complete faith. The Mary in the *Noli me tangere* may not touch Christ because, at that moment, she does not possess the capacity to comprehend Christ in his resurrected and divine form. Ambrose extrapolates the *Noli me tangere* in his *Expositio* into a *noli manum adhibere maioribus*: an injunction against instruction. He compares the Mary of John 20 with Eve: the first sin was committed by a woman; hence, the first person to see the resurrected Christ will also be a woman. The annunciation to the apostles is the restitution of the first sin: *per os mulieris mors ante processerat, per os mulieris vita reparatur*. In his *Explanatio psalmorum* XII (24, 2), Ambrose explains the *Noli me tangere* as an incomplete state of faith in comparison to the *Haemorrhoissa*, who because of her complete submission to faith is permitted to touch Christ's mantle[11]. In his *De fide libri V ad Gratianum Augustum* (14, 90), he views the *Noli me tangere* as a gate too small for the capacity of faith in Christ[12].

Augustine (354-430) explains the *Noli me tangere* in his *Sermo* 246 and *Epistola* 120 as the transition from faith in Christ the man to faith in Christ as God[13]. Touch implies belief in Christ's divine nature; for this reason the *Haemorrhoissa* is allowed to touch Christ's mantle. Augustine elaborates on this opposition in his discussion of Thomas (*Sermo* 375C), who touches for lack of faith. Thomas has yet to do what Mary had already done in verse 16 ("Rabboeni"): namely, recognize Christ in his divine manifestation. In his *Sermo* 229L, Augustine embroiders on the theme of the Fall and the weaker sex: woman was the first to lose God in paradise and is thus the first to seek Him with greater desire after his death. Petrus Chrysologus († ca. 450) expresses this typology as follows (*Sermo* 74, 3, and *Sermo* 77, 4.7): the Tree of Knowledge aroused Eve's desire, the tomb of Christ that of the Marys. Of the Marys of Luke 24:10 and their being sent to the apostles, the same author states that they personify the Church and the bride of Christ.

Two Fathers of the Church are notably more positive concerning the *Noli me tangere*. Hippolyte of Rome († 235) relates John 20:17 to Song of Songs 3:1-4 (*In canticum canticorum* 25)[14]. Mary Magdalene is the *apostola apostolorum*, sent by Christ himself to restore Eve.

3. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. MA 157, workshop from Northern Italy or Rome, ca. 400, ivory with the Myrrhophores at the tomb *and the* Assumption of Christ, *detail from the so-called Reidersche Tafel, ivory.*



4. Engraving showing the lost Apostles Sarcophagus from the last quarter of the 4th century depicting the Chairete, *after the engraving by A. Bosio, 1651.*

5. Milan, Santa Maria presso San Celso, late 4th century, Myrrhophores at the tomb, *detail from the sarcophagus at St. Celsus.*

Mary Magdalene is *Ecclesia*, harbinger of salvation, or better yet, the New Eve. She seeks her bridegroom as the Church seeks its people. Jerome (ca. 342-420) explains in his *Epistula* 120 and *Homilia in Johannem evangelistam* that Christ prohibits touch on account of her imperfect faith, which is demonstrated by the fact that she is still searching for his 'body'. The apostles, by contrast, immediately understood the empty tomb in terms of the Resurrection[15]. Jerome contradicts this point of view in his Epistola 65, in which he praises the woman of John 20:17 for her extraordinary faith, calling her *vere turris candadoris et Libani*, the privileged woman among the *sanctae feminae*[16].

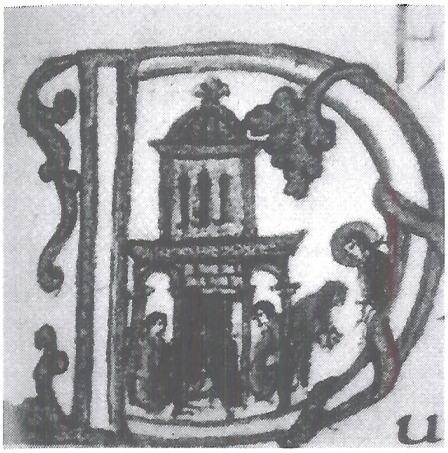
During the Merovingian period (around the 6th-7th centuries in Gaul), an additional phenomenon took place: the fusion of various Marys and nameless women of the gospels. In his sermon of September 21, 591, in the church of San Clemente in Rome, Gregory the Great (560-604) identified Mary (Magdalene) for the first time as the sinner in Luke 7:36-50[17]. The Venerable Bede (672-735) adds the sister of Lazarus to this cluster[18]. Bede calls the sinner in Luke *meretrix* (and she is now also understood as the woman in the *Noli me tangere*). Following in the footsteps of Ambrose and Augustine, the author contrasts the *Noli me tangere* with the *Haemorrhoissa*. With the *Noli me tangere*, Christ sought to show that only those who believed in the truth of the Father may touch Him. Bede emphasizes that in spite of her evident lack of faith, Mary Magdalene nevertheless nurtured an extraordinary love for Christ[19].

2. The artistic situation before 850

The Mary Magdalene of John 20:17 was not depicted during the first few centuries of Christian art. Did the notably ambiguous commentary in patristic texts ensure that the woman of the *Noli me tangere* was kept out of the picture? Early Christian art favored the narrative version found in Matthew and Mark, as seen on an ivory from Munich dating to ca. 400 (myrrhophores) (fig. 3)[20] and the so-called Apostle Sarcophagus (*Chairete*) from the same period (fig. 4)[21]. Both Rafanelli and Mathews argue that given the fact that other Resurrection related motifs were depicted from early Christian times onwards – for example, Thomas, the myrrhophores, who appear on a 4th-century sarcophagus from St. Celsus in Milan (fig. 5)[22] – the *Noli me tangere* episode might have been *specifically* neglected during this period[23]. This remains however a hypothesis. In fact, according to Galit Noga-Banai, at least one exception would be known: a possible *Noli me tangere* on the so-called Brivio capsella (a silver reliquary) from the Early Christian period, and preserved in Paris, Musée du Louvre[24]. On the other hand, it is a fact that only from the Carolingian period onwards, at least a certain emphasis on, and interest in the *single* Mary Magdalene in *Resurrection context* rises (so according to John's *Noli me tangere* narrative).

Let us try to formulate some consequences concerning the apparent absence of John 20:17 in the arts during the earliest period of Christian art. First, there is the matter of gender asymmetry in the iconography of the Resurrection. In Early Christian art, Christ does not stand opposite a single woman, but at least two witnesses. Secondly, the injunction against touch so clearly problematized in patristic texts is ignored in the image, meaning that it is absent as a 'visual problem'. Finally, this means that Mary Magdalene did not exist as a separate iconographic personality during this period. We will now examine these three deductions in more depth.

The fact that the resurrected Christ does not appear to a single individual may have an apologetic reason. The witness of several people probably had greater power to convince. According to Deuteronomy 19:15: "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established," and



6. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, ms. lat. 9428, fol. 63v, scriptorium of Metz, 850, Myrrhophores at the tomb *and* Noli me tangere, *initial from the Drogo Sacramentary, made for Bishop Drogo of Metz.*

7. Monza, Cathedral, 6th century, Myrrhophores at the tomb, *a pilgrim's* ampulla *(detail) from Jerusalem.*

John 8:17: "It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true"[25]. The women are only depicted in order to provide powerful evidence that the Son of Man has been resurrected.

That the *Noli me tangere* was not considered a visual problem until later on may relate to the typology of Christ in the visual idiom of Early Christian art. In 4th- and 5th-century iconography, Christ is based on a late-antique model which shows Him as a healer or physician[26]. Countless are the miracles depicted on early Christian sarcophagi. These miraculous scenes involve touching, because it is through touch that healing takes place. In this sense, the *Haemorrhoissa* is a more interesting *exemplum* than Mary Magdalene in the *Noli me tangere*. Consequently, in Early Christian art, which has as its goal the revelation of the Savior as healer, the act of not touching is hardly a logical motif.

As far as the third conclusion is concerned – the fact that Mary Magdalene was but one of many anointing women and not the solo protagonist she would become in later Resurrection iconography – the answer lies in religious practice. Mary Magdalene lacked an individual profile because she did not yet occupy the devotional spotlight. For the time being, her character did not yet have the power to distinguish itself from the group, and there was no gender-based tension between Christ and one particular woman[27].

3. The religious situation

With the fusion of New Testament women provided by Gregory the Great and the Venerable Bede, Mary Magdalene acquired more solid contours in the literature: a penitent sinner, sister of Martha, witness to the Resurrection. The reasons for this production, which was probably not undertaken lightly, have been the subject of speculation[28]. The various versions of the Resurrection story in the Gospels which had formerly caused confusion could now be harmoniously combined in a single personality, and the typological effect of this new, composite woman must also have played a role in the Magdalene's growing autonomy. Now there appeared a woman with the characteristics of both a sinner and a convert, a penitent and a disciple who was a witness to the raising of the dead (Lazarus and Christ). In other words, Christianity put forward the image of a woman who combined sin, penitence and hope, and it is to this image that Mary Magdalene owes her veneration[29]. The Mary Magdalene of the *Noli me tangere* had thus become a woman with an 'evangelical biography'. She became an individual capable of being venerated without being an unblemished heroine. Like all of us, Mary Magdalene also had to pass through the vale of sin and tears before reaching salvation.

In his article *Les origines du culte de Sainte Marie Madeleine en Occident*, Victor Saxer mentions a letter from Chrodebert, bishop of Tours (ca. 653-ca. 674), to Abbot Boba regarding a case of adultery involving a cleric[30]. Chrodebert refers to the penance prescribed by the Council of Orléans (541), but he also mentions Mary Magdalene, by way of an example:

"One may remember this sinner in the gospels named Mary Magdalene. She was filled with the seven vices and the Lord purged her of seven demons. She washed the feet of the Lord with her tears [...] It was this same woman who always followed the Lord, as far as the crucifixion and the tomb, and who, being the first before all the apostles and the Virgin Mary herself, deserved to see Him with the angels, resurrected. She was also the sister of Martha and Lazarus, who the Lord raised from the dead on the fourth day" [31].

The letter demonstrates that the Gregorian fusion had spread rapidly and that Mary Magdalene now served as an example for members of the clergy.

The first literary traces of the cult of Mary Magdalene date from the beginning of the 8th century. The martyrology of the Venerable Bede mentions July 22 as the feast-day of Mary Magdalene: *XI. Kal. Aug. Natale Mariae Magdalenae*[32]. Bede borrowed this notation from the calendar of Constantinople (720-725). In the 8th century there is also mention of the relics of Mary Magdalene[33]. In 1983, the authentic inscription SANCTA MARIA MA(GDA)LI(NA) was found at Saint-André-des-Chelles in a reliquary which was originally from the Merovingian abbey founded by queen Bathilde († 680) and Abbot Bertille († ca. 705). Among the relics of Chelles, there were also artifacts from Palestine and Egypt. This confirms the supposition that the cult entered the West from Asia Minor. In the 6th century, a tomb of Mary Magdalene was reported in Ephesus, and in Bethania she was already venerated as early as the 7th century[34]. In Western Europe, demonstrable cult sites for Mary Magdalene are found in the 10th century at the earliest: at Exeter in England and Halberstadt in Germany. A general dissemination of the cult took place in the 11th century with the foundation of the Abbey of Vézelay on April 10, 1050, with her 'original' relics[35]. Together with Sainte-Baume in Provence, Vézelay continued to be the most important pilgrimage site for Mary Magdalene throughout the Middle Ages[36].

8. Formerly collection of the Grand Duke of Hessen, present whereabouts unknown, workshop of Metz, 9th century, Myrrhophores at the tomb *and* Noli me tangere, *book cover for a Gospel Book, ivory.*

9. Rome, Santa Sabina, probably Syrian sculptors, 431, Chairete, *detail of the wooden door.*

Tradition and renewal. Case studies in Carolingian and Ottonian art

1. Carolingian art

It is generally assumed that a miniature from the Drogo Sacramentary in Metz, which dates to the middle of the 9th century, is the earliest representation of the *Noli me tangere* (fig. 6)[37]. The manuscript was intended for Bishop Drogo (801-855), the illegitimate son of Charlemagne[38]. He was an important patron of the arts in Metz. The representation forms part of a historiated initial "D" in the mass of White Thursday on fol. 63v near the text of John 20:11-18[39]. The initial is almost entirely dominated by the aedicula of the Holy Sepulchre. Two angels flank the building. In the foreground is a veiled woman who extends her left arm toward the angels in a gesture of supplication. The woman is duplicated on the right side of the tomb: could she be Mary Magdalene? She bows with both arms extended toward Christ. Christ's body emerges halfway from the letter. He has a halo. The vines of the decorated initial terminate above in a crown that descends over the *Noli me tangere* scene. The crown divides the scene between the Holy Sepulchre and the encounter between Christ and the woman.

The iconography of this scene is hybrid. The two women stand back to back and probably synchronize two phases in the Resurrection story: asking the angels about the body, on the one hand, and the encounter with Christ on the other. This encounter can refer to Mark 16:9 as well as John 20:11-18, although only the latter mentions two angels. The combining of different Gospels in the same image is not unusual in medieval iconography. Moreover, this kind of hybridity sometimes arises out of the combination of different visual prototypes. The accentuation of the Holy Sepulchre is familiar from early Christian examples featuring the myrrhophores, such as the Munich ivory (fig. 3) or the 6th-century pilgrim's *ampulla* from Jerusalem now in the Cathedral of Monza (fig. 7)[40]. The position of the probable Mary Magdalene recalls that of the *Chairete* as depicted on the Apostles Sarcophagus mentioned earlier (fig. 4).

We encounter a similar iconographic hybridity from approximately the same period on an ivory book cover which was also made in Metz (fig. 8). The ivory's program is rich. From top to bottom, we see: the sleeping soldiers before the tomb (Matt. 28:4), Christ and Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9) or the *Noli me tangere* (John 20:11-18), and finally Christ's appearance before the eleven apostles (Mark 16:14-18, Luke 24:36-53, John 20:19-23)[41]. The presumed *Noli me tangere* appears back to back with the scene featuring the three myrrhophores. Christ stands to the left of Mary Magdalene, which remains exceptional in the iconography of the subject[42]. The two figures are separated from one another by a tree. Mary Magdalene bows slightly and extends both hands toward the lower body of Christ. Christ makes an instructive gesture with his index finger, and in his right hand holds a scroll as the image of Logos, the word become flesh.

The tree in the initial miniature and the ivory has three possible functions. It divides narrative episodes or figures and therefore has a formal-compositional function. This is clearly the case in the sober scene featuring the *Chairete* on the wooden door of Santa Sabina (ca. 432) in Rome, where each of the three figures is separated from the others by a tree with large leaves (fig. 9)[43]. It is possible that the tree on the ivory is a continuation of a similar, earlier *Chairete* model. In the second place, the tree is also a narrative index. It is *pars pro toto* for the context of the garden in which the event takes place, the setting in the Gospel of John[44]. It evokes paradise, with both the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge, and evokes the

10. Trier, Stadtbibliothek, ms. 24, fol. 90v, written and illuminated by the monks Keraldus and Heribert for Archbishop Egmont of Trier, Reichenau, 977-993, Noli me tangere, *miniature.*

heavenly Jerusalem in which the Tree of Life returns. The cross of Christ was already considered a reference to both trees in patristic literature[45]. In the context of Mary Magdalene, the tree clarifies the typological connection to Eve. We already referred to the way Petrus Chrysologus († ca. 450) formulated the connection between the tree and the Holy Sepulchre – between Eve and Mary Magdalene – quite literally. Significantly, the tree will continue to form a component of later depictions of the *Noli me tangere*, the meaning of which must always be checked against the possibilities described here.

Looking back over the examples discussed so far, it is possible to state that the individual encounter between Mary Magdalene and Christ took place for the first time in the art of the Carolingian period. Incontrovertible evidence is still lacking as to whether the artists had John or another Gospel in mind. Moreover, it cannot really be said that the motif is autonomous. At this point the *Noli me tangere* is still a subsidiary motif found in cycles. Nor is there a question of genuine visual innovation. The Carolingian *Noli me tangere* is formulated in the same way as the early Christian *Chairete*, minus one or two women. Particular to the Carolingian Renaissance, with its flourishing scriptoria and patronage of the church and court, is that it reaches back to the visual models of early Christianity for its artistic quality. The renewal of the Carolingian ateliers explains why the iconography continued to borrow so heavily from early Christian types.

The unfolding Carolingian *Noli me tangere* iconography maintains its connection to the Gregorian identity of Mary Magdalene, which stimulated the focus on her personality[46]. Allwin DeLeeuw argues that Gregorian sermons and homilies had popular appeal throughout the Middle Ages because they were evocative, and full of narrative detail and *exempla*. In the centuries that followed, his sermons on the Magdalene were widely circulated and came to be assimilated into the Holy Week liturgies. It is not clear why the visual arts reacted two centuries later. The cult of the relic and the dissemination of local Western legends concerning Mary Magdalene however, are more or less synchronous with the Carolingian renaissance. In the 9th century, a new tradition began to take root: that of the *Vita eremetica*, a text which was probably handed down by Greek anchorites via Southern Italy. The *Vita* tells of Mary Magdalene's penitence in the desert, where she lived as a hermit for thirty years without food or clothing. The *Vita* is modeled on the Greek *Vita eremetica* of Mary of Egypt and was grafted onto Mary Magdalene, making her the Western European variant of the anchorite phenomenon[47]. However, the rise of the cult of the relic and the dissemination of legend were not yet reflected in the extremely limited iconography of Mary Magdalene in general[48]. The relics and the *Vita eremitica* did not have a direct effect on the problems associated with the *Noli me tangere*. Hence, in Carolingian times, the factors needed for the breakthrough of the *Noli me tangere* were still lacking.

2. Ottonian art

During the Ottonian period (10th-11th centuries), the *Noli me tangere* gradually emerged from the twilight zone, was thoroughly renewed and acquired a lasting identity.

The *Codex Egberti* (Reichenau, ca. 977-993) bears witness to this renewal and its staying power (fig. 10)[49]. Egbertus was chancellor to Otto I and Otto II and had a great deal of political and artistic influence in Lorraine. The manuscript is important in the history of western art on account of its immense wealth of miniatures. The miniature depicting the encounter between Christ and Mary Magdalene illustrates the text of John 20:11-18 on the preceding *folio* 90v. We may therefore speak of a direct text-image relationship, and for the first time this iconography can be unmistakably identified as the *Noli me tangere*. Moreover, in accordance with the name mentioned in John 20, the inscription above the woman reads MARIA (Christ bears the inscription JESUS CHRISTUS). The composition is divided in the middle by a slender tree. On the left is a simple representation of the tomb: an angel holding a staff at each end of an empty sarcophagus. The winding sheet lies in the hollow of the tomb. Mary Magdalene kneels near the tree-trunk, her arms extended in the direction of Christ's feet. Christ inclines toward Mary Magdalene and points to her. In his left hand He holds a book.

11. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CLM 4453, fol. 251r, scriptorium of Reichenau, 998-1000, Noli me tangere, *miniature from the Gospel Book of Otto III.*

The miniature exhibits the archaic characteristics we have seen earlier: the two angels, Christ with a book, Mary Magdalene reaching for his feet with both hands, the tree[50]. It is possible that this codex is also based on a *Chairete* prototype. Through the influence of the *Chairete* model, the *Noli me tangere* has taken over a type of formulation which is not well suited to the psychology of the narrative found in John 20. In other words, the *Noli me tangere* is (still) fixed in an earlier pattern featuring a subservient Mary Magdalene bowing before Christ's feet. Nowhere in the Gospel of John,

however, is it stated that Mary Magdalene was kneeling, or that she threw herself tragically at Christ's feet. Nor does the Gospel state that the two persons involved were standing opposite one another. However, the text does indicate Mary's turning to the Lord twice[51].

It is clear how insistent formal transmission can be for the processes of iconographic development: how a pictorial form can be collectively imprinted as an emblem that is incorporated entirely on the basis of convention. But does this emblem, once placed alongside the text of John 20:11-18, begin to acquire another meaning? During this period, the Mary Magdalene of the *Noli me tangere* had already been understood as the penitent sinner in Luke for quite some time. Both women had in the meantime been superimposed on one another. Is it not possible that the bowing woman of the *Noli me tangere* has been *pyschologized* as someone overtaken by grief and remorse, particularly given the fact that her character is reinforced by such connotations in the *Vita eremetica*?

Artistic models, however constant they may be, are read differently depending on their relationship to the textual sources that inform them and the period in which they come to light. The Egbert codex marks a moment in the history of the subject's development in which we sense that the *Noli me tangere* lights up within the formal history of the encounter between the resurrected Christ and the woman/women and embeds itself within an existing model. From now on, we will not be able to conceive of the *Noli me tangere* apart from this composition.

The Gospel of Otto III (Reichenau, 998-1000) goes a step further in the development of the *Noli me tangere* iconography (fig. 11)[52]. The element of opposition, the architectural tomb with two angels, the winding sheet and the bowing, humble Mary Magdalene return as a pattern[53]. By contrast, we see for the first time that one of Christ's feet begins to withdraw, while the other still points toward Mary Magdalene. The synchronicity of opposed footwork becomes typical of the *Noli me tangere*. Also striking in this respect is the involvement of the angels. Their hands point to the particular moment of engagement between Christ and Mary Magdalene. The angel on the left looks at Mary, the one on the right at Christ. What distinguishes this *Noli me tangere* from its predecessors, however, is 'psychological': *eye contact*.

Eye contact in the world of the image, in contrast to everyday life, is never a matter of chance. Glances do not meet accidentally in iconography, but are governed by the semantics of love, on the one hand, and on the other by the transmission of knowledge[54]. The twin motifs of love and knowledge have been associated with Mary Magdalene since the very earliest exegeses. The relationship of bride and bridegroom was already recognized in the patristic period by Hippolyte of Rome, among others. But the problems of insight tended to be negative during this period. The Mary Magdalene of the *Noli me tangere* was a woman of imperfect insight and flawed faith in the divine nature of Christ, which was immediately offered as an explanation for the injunction against touch. The mutual gaze in the Ottonian manuscript demonstrates precisely the opposite. Are we concerned in this period with a change in the spiritual perception of Mary Magdalene and the *Noli me tangere*, which in turn exerted its influence on visual tradition?

At the beginning of the 10th century, an anonymous author formerly – and erroneously – believed to be Abbot Odo added the final touches to a sermon for one of the most powerful Benedictine cloisters of the time, Cluny. The *Sermo in Veneratione Sanctae Mariae Magdalenae* is considered one of the most influential apocrypha dealing with Mary Magdalene[55]. The sermon was read on July 22, the feast-day of Mary Magdalene, and influenced hymns[56], lauds and dramaturgical rites, as in the phrase *Quem queritis in sepulchro, o Christicole* ("Who do you seek in the grave, O followers of Christ"), known from a Limoges manuscript dating to ca. 923-934[57]. The *Sermo*, also known as the *Vita evangelica*, was a critical text in the new 'personality formation' of Mary Magdalene. The central theme of the *In veneratione* is the transformation of sin into perfection. The connection between the sinner and the witness to the Resurrection which arose with Gregory the Great was now elaborated in all its implications. Mary Magdalene's tears of remorse form the necessary *tabula rasa* for what she achieves in the *Noli me tangere*. In the injunction against touch, she recognizes/acknowledges the assimilation of Father and Son and becomes the first proclaimer of the Church, a church fragrant as the scent of her balsam is fragrant. Mary Magdalene's remorse is the necessary precondition for the revolution in the history of salvation after the Fall. According to the influential *Sermo*, the *Noli me tangere* is thus the ultimate goal of the revelation, of the insight – the *salutifera doctrina* – attained by means of penitence and internal remorse[58]. The exchange of glances in the Ottonian miniature is the conventional form used for evoking the *salutifera doctrina* in the mind of the viewer.

12. Hildesheim, Church of St. Michael, 1008-1015, bronze doors of Bernward of Hildesheim.

The reverberation of the exchange of glances in the full-page miniature is underscored by the play of hands. The left hand of Mary Magdalene and the right hand of Christ reflect one another. Her hand moves upwards, his downwards; in this way they almost form a closed bowl. The injunction against touch so subtly entwined in these fingers, which would continue to be a field of tension for later artists, is expressed here in the poetry of exchange, the reflection – in short, in the hand gesture as a channel of communication. The power of a single moment, of three words, the germ of John 20, is depicted here for the first time in a masterly way.

The Gospel of Otto III was written in one of the most important Benedictine cloisters on the Bodensee (founded in 724). It is well known

13: Hildesheim, Church of St. Michael, 1008-1015, Noli me tangere, *detail from the bronze doors of Bernward of Hildesheim.*

14. Hildesheim, Church of St. Michael, 1008-1015, Creation of Eve, *detail from the bronze doors of Bernward of Hildesheim.*

that the Ottonian family maintained close ties to Cluny and supported its Christianization of Europe[59]. Reichenau had an important scriptorium where scribes and miniaturists were active. This sacramentary was meant for Emperor Otto III himself, and must have been made under the auspices of abbots Witigowo (985-997) and Alawich II (997-1000)[60]. In the unique context of an intellectual and artistic elite, familiar with the Benedictine reform concerning Mary Magdalene, a new iconographic interpretation of the *Noli me tangere* is not surprising[61].

The bronze doors of Bishop Bernward (993-1022) for the Church of St. Michael in Hildesheim (1008-1015) (fig. 12) feature one of the most well-known iconographic programs in the history of art[62]. They are still considered a textbook example of medieval typology. In this typology, meaning is generated in the comparison of events of the Old Covenant with events of the New[63]. In this way, a system of salvation was developed that viewed the Old as the foreshadowing of the New, as a seed which only germinated with the arrival of Christ. The typological way of thinking was originally employed by the Fathers of the Church for transferable meanings. Gradually, coherent systems were elaborated which spanned the entire history of the Bible, a development which reached its peak in the 12th century. The program of the Hildesheim doors is a prime example of this type of reasoning.

Eight scenes from the New Testament run from bottom to top on the right door, and an equal number of scenes from the Old Testament on the left, arranged from top to bottom. In this way, one is able to read scenes from Genesis to the Resurrection diachronically, following a U-shaped scheme. But the way in which the scenes are synchronically juxtaposed from left to right, or from old to new, represents a sophisticated typological choice which allows the viewer to become the interpreter[64]. He or she will be able to glean deeper meanings from the contrast, thereby acquiring insight into God's plan. The *Noli me tangere* is the last episode taken from biblical history and is located in the upper register of the right door (fig. 13). The scene is contrasted with the first of the cycle at the upper left: the Creation of Eve (fig. 14)[65]. The composition of the *Noli me tangere* is dominated by Christ, who holds a banner in his left hand. With his right palm, He points toward Mary Magdalene, who almost reaches out to Christ in *proskynesis*[66]. At the left is a bush-like tree with a bird, perhaps an eagle. To the right of Christ is a gate, suggesting a city, and the same bush, this time with two birds which are clearly eagles with spread wings. The figure of Mary Magdalene refers to the archaic type of the *Chairete*, but casts a sidelong gaze at Christ. The scene is innovative on account of its hidden layers of meaning. The trees are actually fruit-bearing grapevines, a well-known symbol for the sacrificial death of Christ[67]. From late-antique times onward, the eagle was a symbol of victory, of apotheosis and Assumption[68]. The (presumed) eagle on Mary Magdalene's side is passive; the eagle on the side of Christ is active, depicted in heavenward flight. In the bronze panel, the inertia of rising is combined with its completion, or to put it another way: "here" is combined with "above", "not yet risen" with the effective union of Father and Son, precisely according to Christ's message to Mary Magdalene in John 20:17. The maker of the bronze doors has succeeded in combining the soteriological dimension of the *Noli me tangere* with a preview of the Assumption.

Christ appears on a schematically represented mountain[69]. One of his feet is lower than the other, again expressing the dynamics of "here" and "there", the point at which his departure must take place. In the Museo Arcivescovile

15. Ravenna, Museo Arcivescovile, Gallic workshop, early 5th century, Chairete, *detail from a marble relief.*

16. Hildesheim, Domschatz, Cod. 18, fol. 75, scriptorium of Reichenau, 1011-1014, Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, *miniature from the Gospel Book of Bernward of Hildesheim.*

in Ravenna is a marble reliquary from the 15th century which shows a comparable scene (fig. 15)[70]. Two women kneel longingly before Christ (the *Chairete* from Matthew 28:1-15). Christ withdraws in a way which strongly recalls his body language on the bronze doors. his right foot is on elevated ground[71]. Christ carries the banner as a reference to his victory over death. The hand of God (*manus Dei*) appears from above and lifts his arm. A field of tension is created in which Christ forms the center of two contradictory movements: the women, or earthly life, grasp at Him, while God bears Him away to his heavenly destination. On the bronze door of Bernward, Christ moves with a similar, though less explicit, dynamic. As a result, the viewer recognizes in the figure of Christ the suggestion of the impending Assumption. By replacing the conventional spade in the visual arts, the banner emphasizes the triumph of Christ's Resurrection.

This *Noli me tangere* is concerned with Christ's departure and Mary Magdalene's need to find the strength to let Him go. This power and the insight came with it, according to the *Sermo* of Cluny, are awakened by the three words which lie at the basis of this particular iconography. The scene is the last of the cycle depicted on the bronze doors and, as noted above, appears opposite the Creation of Eve: Mary Magdalene as *Eva nova* (and Christ as *Adam novus*)[72]. In the *Noli me tangere*, the perfection of the salvation cycle is celebrated, displayed with virtuosity according to the typological scheme.

An explanation must still be given for the gate behind Christ. It is probably not intended to represent the Holy Sepulchre, which in this instance is on the wrong side, chronologically speaking[73]. Does the architecture refer to the place where Christ is going, the heavenly Jerusalem? On the marble relief in Ravenna (fig. 15), similar architecture appears at the right; we see an open gate and crenellations, as on the walls of a city. The *Noli me tangere* opens the door to the Last Things[74]. The heavenly Jerusalem springs from the injunction against touch. Or rather, after the last scene on the bronze doors has been seen and considered, the doors may open and admit the viewer to the heavenly Jerusalem within – the Church of St. Michael itself.

Yet a second appearance of Christ to Mary Magdalene was also made for Bernward of Hildesheim[75]. This time, in the form of a frontispiece to the Gospel of Mark in his private evangelary (ca. 1011-1014) (fig. 16)[76]. The miniature comprises two registers. Below, the evangelist Mark and the apostle Peter exchange a book. It is a so-called 'commission miniature', based on the conviction that Mark wrote his gospel on the basis of Peter's eyewitness account. At the same time, this register refers to the convention of the 'author portrait', the late-antique and Carolingian custom of indicating each of the four Gospels by means of a portrait of the evangelist in question, usually in the act of writing. Since we are concerned here with the gospel of Mark, the upper register does not portray the *Noli me tangere*, but rather Christ's appearance to Mary Magdalene according to Mark 16:9, in which she spreads the good news among the other disciples afterward. In this Gospel, nothing is said concerning touch (or not touching). In the miniature, however, physical contact nevertheless takes place between the kneeling Mary Magdalene and Christ: He places his foot on her right forearm, just above the hand. She looks up at Him while He blesses her. Christ is surrounded by a mandorla. In his left hand He holds a book. At the left is a contemporary domed building symmetrically framed by two trees. In the Holy of Holies hang two white winding sheets.

The contact between Mary Magdalene and Christ may be a holdover from the *Chairete*. Robert Deshman finds that the miniaturist consciously allowed a consummated act of touching to be seen in order to express Mary Magdalene's higher state of being: her submission to faith in the divinity of Christ. Indeed, in the commentaries of the time, such as the *Sermo* of Cluny discussed above, this surrender was described by the figure of Mary Magdalene as an enlightened woman. Her upward gaze may also refer to this topos. Moreover, the mandorla is an indication of a separate sacral space, referring to Christ in his divine condition[77]. The mandorla is thus the border between the 'worldly now' and the 'divine there'[78]. Mary Magdalene's hand extends briefly across the boundary of this divine world.

Deshman explains their contact in the Gospel of Mark on the basis of exegetical interpretations borrowed from the *Noli me tangere* in John. His explanation passes over the surprising nature of their touch. In the first place, the

act proceeds from Christ – He places his foot on her arm – and not from Mary Magdalene, as Deshman claims. Christ prevents Mary Magdalene from making a gesture that seeks touch. He 'steps on her hand with his feet.' This gesture is in principle charged with negative connotations. It is usually evil that one tramples underfoot[79].

One might consider whether or not the laws of composition play a role. Perhaps Mary Magdalene's *Chairete* position is shifted onto the figure of Christ – she throws herself at his feet – with overlapping as the result. In proto-perspectival art, overlapping is often a mean of indicating a spatial difference. Christ is located in the mandorla of 'untouchability'. He is already defined by the divine and marked by the mandorla as an entity beyond the world of visibility and sensuality[80]. In other words, is touch actually taking place here?

In spite of the confusing visual reading, the artist does manage to achieve a striking rhythm between hands and feet, blessing and blocking, sending and departing, summoning and prohibiting. And it is precisely this interplay of opposites that may be the message intended by the artist. Christ indicates that Mary Magdalene must stop on account of his divine condition and his imminent departure. At the same time, He blesses her and charges her with a specific task: to spread the news of his Resurrection. The dissemination of knowledge is also the principal theme of the commission miniature as a whole. The register depicting the encounter between Mary Magdalene and Christ corresponds to the transfer of the Holy Scripture from Peter to Mark. The miniature embodies the manuscript itself, which was meant to spread knowledge by and for one of the most well-read, art-loving bishops of the period, Bernward of Hildesheim. The bishop continues the chain of events initiated by Christ's charge to Mary Magdalene.

3. Conclusion and extrapolation of results

Unlike the Carolingian examples, which featured static scenes and which scarcely distinguished between the myrrhophores, the *Chairete* and Mary Magdalene, the three Ottonian examples show signs of individualization and symbolic innovation. Around 1000, Mary Magdalene acquired a specific form in the visual arts for the first time, with characteristics that differed according to the artistic interpretation and context of the patron.

The Egbert codex served a transitional function. It represented a turn from form to content, from archetypal models to the content of the *Noli me tangere*.

The miniature of Emperor Otto III was notable for the intensity with which it expressed the moment of contact between Mary Magdalene and Christ. For the first time, Mary Magdalene was aroused from an exclusively servile position and addressed her entire being to the Son of Man. The 'psychologization' found here may derive from the *Sermo*, which gained in influence during this period, or it may be related to the fact that the manuscript was intended for the Emperor and Empress and that the miniature mirrors in some way a courtly dialogue[81].

The Mary Magdalene on the bronze doors of Hildesheim does not reflect private theocratic notions; rather, she serves a public function. She forms the culmination of an iconographic program that communicates soteriology and eschatology in a public space. This message comprises several layers of knowledge, from its typological organization to the symbols present in the individual scenes. This *Noli me tangere* was meant to instruct the people in the core mysteries of Death, Resurrection and Assumption. The confrontation between Eve and Mary Magdalene is presented on the bronze doors of Hildesheim for the first time. Here, the subordinate position of Mary Magdalene resembles an act of penance. This penitence must in turn be seen in light of a sinful Eve. Mary Magdalene stoops under the weight of the Fall: the weight of her sex as such[82].

The Mary Magdalene in the author portrait for the private Evangelary of Bishop Bernward of Hildesheim is of another order. The presumed touch remains a mystery. This ambivalence is particular to the depiction of Mary Magdalene itself, as it was in part determined by the Fathers of the Church. In this miniature, her role is both limited (literally restricted by the border of the mandorla) and chosen (she is blessed by Christ). Mary Magdalene is brought together with Peter's charge to Mark, the actual text of this part of the manuscript. This addition generates both a common rubric – the dissemination of the faith – and an opposition – competition between genders. In the first instance, a woman must adjust her faith in Christ the man in order to encompass Christ as God, and is asked to spread the news by word of mouth. In the second, a man has faith in the risen Christ, possesses the keys to the Church and is, one assumes, a direct source for the text of the Gospel of Mark. Hence, a contrast also arises between oral and written dissemination: the first is feminine, the second masculine. The gender opposition between Peter and Mary Magdalene is already evident in the writings of the Church Fathers. Petrus Chrysologus says in his *Sermo* 76 that, because she is a woman, Mary Magdalene could never have been an actual apostle[83]. According to Augustine, Christ appeared first to a woman *and not to Peter* because it was through woman that death entered the world. And according to Jerome, Peter understood what Mary Magdalene did not: the empty tomb.

Closing remarks. Noli me tangere *and the twilight zone*

In the development of the *Noli me tangere* iconography, it has been possible to establish various syncopated rhythms between literature and spirituality, the history of the church and the history of art. Visually, the *Noli me tangere* initially derived its identity not from a direct translation of the text of John 20:11-18, but from two separate developments. The first involves the impetus of early Christian models: the myrrhophores and the *Chairete* from Matthew and Mark. The second concerns the *impetus* of the Carolingian period: the individualization of a single woman in the encounter with the resurrected Christ. Striking in this respect is the fact that her attribute, the jar of ointment, has been omitted. In Carolingian times, it was still not clear whether the Gospel of John or that of Mark served as the textual source. A notable characteristic of later *Noli me tangere* iconography is the stooping posture of Mary Magdalene. This standard pose is a residue of the *Chairete*, which is preserved by the *Noli me tangere* motif but gradually acquired connotations of 'petition' and 'penitence' as the spiritual and literary concretization of Mary Magdalene's personality advanced.

As far as the motif's relationship to literature, spirituality and the history of the church is concerned, several hypotheses can be formulated. With the consolidation of her personality by Gregory the Great, Mary Magdalene gained in aura and impact as soon as figurative art ac-

17. Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume, Basilica of Mary Magdalene, 1516, Magdalene reliquary, *inlay work in gold and precious stones.*

quired greater importance in Western Europe at the Carolingian court. By analogy, she was also increasingly individualized iconographically. In the end, it was the Ottonian court which emancipated the *Noli me tangere*. From then on, we encounter examples which are indisputably modeled on both the words and emotions of the *Noli me tangere*. Presumably this visual emancipation was stimulated in the first place by the hagiography of the Cluniac *Sermo in veneratione*. In the second place, the Ottonian emancipation was characterized by sensitivity to gender and the symbolic multivalence specific to the matriarchal theocracy of the court (Otto III), on the on hand, and the educational goals of the clergy on the other (Bernward of Hildesheim). With the patronage of Otto III and Bernward of Hildesheim, the *Noli me tangere* leaves the twilight zone and enters a new era in the history of its iconographical development.

From the second half of the 11th century onward, the *Noli me tangere* is no longer a rarity, but a constant motif in cycles depicting the life of Christ or Mary Magdalene[84]. The founding of the Abbey of Vézelay on April 27, 1050, may be considered the historical caesura of the new era. From Burgundy, the newly compiled legend of the *Vita eremetica* spread across Western Europe[85]. Researchers of Provence have long sought to make a second religious radius, Sainte-Baume, antecedent to Vézelay[86], but the former is now generally accepted as having been founded at the end of the 11th century[87]. In 1279, no less than Charles II of Anjou found the 'true' relics of Mary Magdalene in a tomb in the crypt of Saint-Maximin at the instigation of a dream[88]. From that time onward, the house of Anjou would nurture a particular veneration for the saint[89]. In 1295, Pope Boniface VIII declared the Provençal relics authentic. One of the relics was a piece of skin from Mary Magdalene's forehead, supposedly touched by Christ himself (fig. 17)[90]. This relic was known by another name... *Noli me tangere*[91].

Catalogue

Myrrhophores at the tomb - Chairete

3rd century
Myrrhophores at the tomb, fresco in the baptisterium of Dura Europos, 3rd century – Dura Europos

4th century
Myrrhophores at the tomb, detail from the sarcophagus at St. Celsus, late 4th century – marble – Milan, Santa Maria presso San Celso

Engraving after the lost Apostles Sarcophagus from the last quarter of the 4th century depicting the *Chairete*, after the engraving by A. Bosio, 1651

5th century
Myrrhophores at the tomb and the Assumption of Christ, from the so-called Reidersche Tafel, Northern Italy or Rome, ca. 400 – ivory, 187×116 mm – Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. no. MA 157

Chairete, detail from a diptych, Northern Italy, ca. 400 – ivory, 307×134 mm – Milan, Castello Sforzesco, Trivulzio Collection

Chairete, detail from a relief, Gallic, early 5th century – marble – Ravenna, Museo Arcivescovile

Chairete, detail from a door at Santa Sabina in Rome, probably by Syrian sculptors, 431 – wood, 330×350 mm – Rome, Santa Sabina

6th century
Myrrhophores at the tomb and Chairete, miniature from the Rabbula Evangelary, Syria, ca. 586 – Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Cod. Plut. I, 56, fol. 13r

Myrrhophores at the tomb, detail from a pilgrim's ampulla from Jerusalem, 6th century – Monza, cathedral treasury, ampulla no. 13

Myrrhophores at the tomb, detail from a reliquary with stones from the Holy Site in Palestine, 6th-7th century – wood, tempera and goldleaf – Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Sancta Sanctorum

Myrrhophores at the tomb, detail from a pilgrim's ampulla from Jerusalem, 6th-7th century – Washington D.C., Dumbarton Oaks

9th century
Chairete, detail from a silver reliquary of Pope Pascal I for the relic of the Holy Cross, Rome, ca. 817-824 – silver, partially gilt, niello, 295×250 mm – Rome, Museo Sacro, inv. no. 985

Chairete, miniature from the Utrecht Psalter, Utrecht, ca. 830 – pen and ink drawing, 330×250 mm – Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, ms. 38, fol. 24r

Chairete, detail from a diptych, 9th-century Carolingian copy after a 6th-century original – ivory, 315×115 mm (entire panel) – Milan, cathedral treasury, inv. no. 1386

10th century
Myrrhophores at the tomb and Chairete, miniature from the Sacramentary of Fulda, 975 – 270×240 mm – Göttingen, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, ms. theol. 231, fol. 64

Chairete, detail from the Basilevski Situla, Northern Italy, ca. 980 – ivory – London, Victoria and Albert Museum

Chairete, detail from a book cover, Trier, 2nd half of the 10th century – ivory, 294×121 mm – Manchester, John Rylands Library

Chairete, detail from a book cover, Sankt Gallen, 10th-11th century – ivory, 159×63 mm – Rome, Museo Sacro, inv. no. 1099

11th century
Chairete, miniature from the Tetra Evangelary, Byzantine, 11th century – Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Cod. Conv. Soppr. 160, fol. 214

Chairete, detail from a relief, 2nd half of the 11th century – ivory – Salerno, Museo Diocesano

Possible confusion with the *Haemorrhoissa* motif

3rd century
Christ and the Haemorrhoissa, mural from the catacomb of Petrus and Marcellinus, Rome, 3rd century

4th century
Christ and the Haemorrhoissa, detail from the Lipsanotheca of Brescia, ca. 360-370 – ivory – Brescia, Museo Civico

5th century
Raising of Lazarus and Haemorrhoissa or Noli me tangere, detail from the Capsella Brivio, beginning of the 5th century – Paris, Louvre, Inv. Bj. 1951

Noli me tangere* – *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene

9th century
Myrrhophores at the tomb and Noli me tangere, initial from the Drogo Sacramentary, made for Bishop Drogo of Metz, Metz, 850 – h: 33 mm – Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. lat. 9428, fol. 58

Myrrhophores at the tomb and Noli me tangere, initial from the Drogo Sacramentary, made for Bishop Drogo of Metz, Metz, 850 – h: 33 mm – Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, ms. lat. 9428, fol. 63v

Myrrhophores at the tomb and Noli me tangere, book cover for an evangelary, Metz, 9th century – ivory – formerly collection of the Grand Duke of Hessen, present whereabouts unknown

10th century
Noli me tangere, miniature from the *Codex Egberti*, written and illuminated by the monks Keraldus and Heribert for Archbishop Egmont of Trier, Reichenau, 977-993 – 270x210 mm – Trier, Stadtbibliothek, ms. 24, fol. 90v

Noli me tangere, miniature from the Evangelary of Otto III, Reichenau, 998-1000 – 347x245 mm – Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CLM 4453, fol. 251r

Noli me tangere, detail from a relief, Spain, 10th-11th century – ivory, 268x133 mm – New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

11th century
Noli me tangere, detail from the doors of Bernward of Hildesheim for the Church of St. Michael in Hildesheim, 1008-1015 – bronze – Hildesheim, Church of St. Michael

Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, miniature from the Evangelary of Bernward of Hildesheim, Reichenau, 1011-1014 – 183x145 mm – Hildesheim, Domschatz, Cod. 18, fol. 75

Noli me tangere, miniature from the Pericope Book of Henry III, Echternach, ca. 1039-1043 – Bremen, Staatsbibliothek, ms. 621

Mary Magdalene at the tomb and Noli me tangere, miniature from the Farfa Bible originally from the cloister of Santa Maria de Ripoll, Catalan, 1st half of the 11th century – 550x377 mm – Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Vat. lat. 5729, fol. 370

Noli me tangere, miniature from a liturgical scroll from Monte Cassino, 1070-1100 – Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. Lat. 592

Noli me tangere, detail from a relief, Frankish (Bamberg), ca. 1090 – ivory, 143x103 mm – Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. theol. q. 4

Noli me tangere, miniature from a breviary, Liège, 1096-1116 – Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Clm 23261

Noli me tangere, miniature from a liturgical scroll from Monte Cassino, 11th century – London, British Museum, ms. 30337

Noli me tangere, miniature from a manuscript, 11th century – Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, ms. 23

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Notes

1) J. MORTON, *On the Origin of Writing. A Consideration of the Form of Image Writing used by the First Nations of North America, within the Context of Gilles Deleuze's "Proust and Signs,"* available from http://originofwriting.com; accessed September 2006.

2) In his *Early Netherlandish Painting. Its Origins and Character*, vol. 1 (New York 1983), 365, n. 5, Erwin PANOFSKY (1892-1968) writes: "An iconography of the *Noli Me Tangere* scène has still to be written."

3) The following monographs have not been published: A. TROTZIG, *Christus Resurgens Apparet Mariae Magdalena. En ikonografisk studie med tonvikt pa motivets framställning in den tidiga medeltidens konst* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, institute, Stockholm, 1973) and M. LAROW, *The Iconography of Mary Magdalene. The Evolution in Western Tradition until 1300* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, New York University, New York, 1982), M. LEHMANN, *Die Darstellungen des Noli me tangere in der italienischen Kunst vom 12. bis ins 16. Jahrhundert: Eine ikonographische Studie*" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, s.l., 1988); C. L. ROBERTSON, *Gender relations and the Noli me tangere scene in Renaissance Italy* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Victoria, Ottawa, 1993). With the author's permission, we were able to consult: L. M. RAFANELLI, *The Ambiguity of Touch. Saint Mary Magdalene and the 'Noli me Tangere' in Early Modern Italy* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Institute of Fine Arts, New York, 2004). The focus of her research is 15th- and 16th-century Italy. In the second chapter (p. 85-106), the author nevertheless considers several early examples. Among the published studies, we find: Schiller III, p. 88-98; *La Maddalena tra Sacro e Profano. Da Giotto a De Chirico*, exhibition catalogue (Florence, Palazzo Pitti, 25 May - 7 November 1986), ed. M. MOSCO, Florence 1986, pp. 135-145, considers examples from the 16th century; L. SEBASTIANI, *Transfigurazione. Il personaggio evangelico di Maria di Magdala e il mito della peccatrice redenta nella tradizione occidentale*, Brescia 1992, p. 240, erroneously claims that the *Noli me tangere* possesses an iconography that does not change; S. HASKINS, *Mary Magdalen. Myth and Metaphor*, London 1993, presents a *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the figure, with attention to the visual arts, but does not discuss *Noli me tangere* iconography. A. TROTZIG, *L'apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie Madeleine et le drame liturgique*, in «Revue de musicologie», 86/1 (2000), pp. 83-104 sees a reciprocal influence between the iconography of *Noli me tangere* and liturgical drama. *"L'excès des images", L'apparition à Marie-Madeleine*, ed. M. ALPHANT-G. LAFON-D. ARASSE, Paris 2001, pp. 79-126, offer aesthetic considerations of the Titianesque *Noli me tangere*; D. APOSTOLOS-CAPPADONNA, *In search of Mary Magdalene. Images and Traditions*, New York 2002, also considers later examples of the *Noli me tangere*. J.-L. NANCY, *Noli me tangere. Essai sur la levée du corps*, Paris 2003, presents a theological-philosophical

discourse on the *Noli me tangere* as paradox. In B. BAERT, *Touching with the Gaze. A Visual Analysis of the* Noli me tangere, in *Noli me tangere. Mary Magdalene: One Person, Many Images*, ed. B. BAERT-R. BIERINGER-K. DEMASURE-I. VAN DEN EYNDE, Leuven 2006, p. 43-52, aspects of the relationship between text and image are confronted with exegesis. In B. BAERT, Noli me tangere. *Six Exercises in Image Theory and Iconophilia*, in «Image and Narrative», 15 (2007) [online journal available from http://www.imageandnarrative.be/iconoclasm/baert.htm], the notion of the gaze in the *Noli me tangere* is explored from the perspective of image theory.

4) J. G. DECKERS-H. R. SEELIGER-G. MIETKE, *Die Katakombe "Santi Marcellino e Pietro". Repertorium der Malereien*, Vatican City-Münster 1987, p. 312-318; A. GRABAR, *Christian Iconography. A Study of Its Origins*, Princeton 1968, p. 32, image 67. See also SH. M. SALVADORI, *Per Feminam Mors, per Feminam Vita. Images of Women in the Early Christian Funerary Art of Rome* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Institute of Fine Arts, New York, 2002) and TH. F. MATHEWS, *The Clash of Gods*, Princeton 1993, p. 54-91.

5) C. J. WATSON, *The Program of the Brescia Casket*, in «Gesta», 20 (1981), p. 283-298, with bibliography.

6) On the *Haemorrhoissa*, see B. BAERT, *„Wenn ich nur sein Kleid möchte anrühren". Der Frau mit dem Blutfluss in der frühmittelalterlichen Ikonographie (Mark 5:24b-34parr)*, in «Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte», 62/1 (2010), p. 52-76.

7) Mark 16:1-8, Matthew 28:1-15, and Luke 24:1-12.

8) Matthew 28:8-10.

9) A. DUPONT-W. DEPRIL, *Marie-Madeleine et Jean 20,17 dans la littérature patristique latine*, in «Augustiniana», 56 (2006), p. 159-182. The authors offer greater specificity concerning the exegetical studies of Mary Magdalene with additional bibliography, a selection of which is presented here: R. ATWOOD, *Mary Magdalene in the New Testament Gospels and Early Tradition*, Bern 1993, p. 147-218; R. NÜRNBERG, *Apostolae Apostolorum. Die Frauen am Grab als erste Zeuginnen der Auferstehung in der Väterexegese*, in *Stimuli. Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum. FS Ernst Dassmann*, Münster 1996 ['Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum: Ergänzungsband', 23], p. 228-242; R. BIERINGER, *Mary Magdalene in the Four Gospels*, in «The Bible Today», 43 (2005), p. 34-41. See also E. LAMIRANDE, *Marie Madeleine disciple, témoin et apôtre, d'apres l'ancienne literature chrétienne*, in «Science et ésprit», 56 (2004), p. 265-283.

10) AMBROSIUS MEDIOLANENSIS, *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam*, CCSL 14, p. 345-400, 383-400.

11) Idem, *Explanatio psalmorum XII (25, 24, 2)*, Wien 1999 ['Sancti Ambrosi Opera', 6; 'Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum', 64], p. 345.

12) Idem, *De fide ad Gratianum*, Turnhout 2005 ['Fontes christiani, 47, vol. 1], p. 212.

13) AUGUSTINE, *Letters 100-155*, ed. B. RAMSEY, *The Works of Saint Agustine*, London 2003, p. 129-140, 137. See also S. SOENNECKEN, *Misogynie oder Philogynie? Philologisch-theologische Untersuchungen zum Wortfeld Frau bei Augustinus*, Frankfurt am Main 1993. This line of reasoning is also taken over by Paulinus of Nola (355-431) in his *Epistula* 50: PAULINUS NOLANUS, *Epistulae*, ed. M. SKEB, Paulinus von Nola: *Epistulae-Briefe* Freiburg im Breisgau 1998 ['Fontes christiani', 25, 3], p. 1042-1075, 1067.

14) G. GARITTE, *Traités d'Hippolyte sur David et Goliath, sur le cantique des cantiques et sur l'antéchrist – version Géorgienne*, Louvain 1965 ['Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium', 264], p. 45-49. See also: V. SAXER, *Marie Madeleine dans le commentaire d'Hippolyte sur le cantique des cantiques*, in «Revue bénédictine», 101 (1991), p. 219-239.

15) HIERONYMUS, *Epistolae I-LXX*, ed. I. HILBERG, Wien 1996 ['Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum', 54], p. 544.

16) *Ibidem*.

17) GREGORIUS MAGNUS, *Homilia 33* in *Homiliae in Evangelia*, CCSL 141.

18) BEDA VENERABILIS, *In Marci Evangelium expositio*, CCSL 120, p. 606; BEDA VENERABILIS, *In Lucae Evangelium expositio*, *ibidem*, p. 413: «Maria Magdalene ipsa est soror Lazari».

19) BEDA VENERABILIS, *In Marci Evangelium*, *ibidem*, p. 638.

20) See *Kunst und Kunsthandwerk: Meisterwerke im Bayerischen Nationalmuseum, München, Festschrift zum 100-jährigen bestehen des Museums, 1855-1955* ed. O.LENZ, Munich 1955, cat. no. 3; *799. Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit. Karl der Grosse und Papst Leo III in Paderborn*, ed. CHR. STIEGEMANN - M. WEMHOFF, Mainz am Rhein 1999, vol. II, cat. X.2.

21) The sarcophagus has since been lost, but is known through an engraving in A. BOSIO, *Roma Sotterranea*, Rome 1651, and P. ARINGHI, *Roma subterranea novissima*, Coloniae 1659; see also RAFANELLI, *The Ambiguity of Touch*, p. 372, cat. no. 3, ill. 4.

22) Santa Maria presso San Celso; the sarcophagus is now integrated into an altar by Camillo Procaccini (1555-1629); *Santa Maria at Saint Celso*, Milan 1998, p. 8.

23) RAFANELLI, *The Ambiguity of Touch*, p. 55, 344-345. See also MATHEWS, *The Clash of Gods*, p. 54-91.

24) See: G. NOGA-BANAI, *The Trophies of the Martyrs: An Art Historical Study of Early Christian Silver Reliquaries*, Oxford 2008, p. 38-61, fig. 3

25) See also K. THRAEDE, *Zwischen Eva und Maria. Das Bild der Frau bei Ambrosius und Augustinus auf dem Hintergrund der Zeit*, in *Frauen in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter*, ed. W. AFFELDT, Sigmaringen 1990, p. 129-139.

26) M. SMITH, *Jesus the Magician*, London 1978, p. 68-70; MATHEWS, *The Clash of Gods*, p. 54-91; *Heilungswunder in der frühchristliche Kunst*, in *Spätantike und frubes Christentum*, exhibition catalogue (Frankfurt am Main, Liebighaus, December 1983-March 1984) ed. CL. NAUERTH, Frankfurt am Main 1983, p. 339-446, ill. 157; P. J. LALLEMAN, *Healing by a Mere Touch as a Christian Concept*, in «Tyndale Bulletin», 48 (1997), p. 355-361.

27) We cannot explore all of the feminist implications of this line of inquiry; see H. W. ATTRIDGE, *'Don't be touching me': Recent Feminist Scholarship on Mary Magdalene*, in *A Feminist Companion to John*, ed. A.-J. LEVINE, London–New York 2003, p.140 -166.

28) K. L. JANSEN, *The Making of the Magdalen. Preaching and Popular Devotion in Later Middle Ages*, Princeton 1999, p. 32-35.

29) For thorough studies of the literature on the Mary Magdalene *topoi* handed down during the middle ages, see: B. ROSSANO, *Die deutschen und niederländischen Bearbeitungen der Pseudo-Origines-Magdalenenklage*, in «Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur», 126 (2004), p. 233-260; IDEM, Gebristed ir doch des kroenlîns. *Die Sündhaftigkeit und Virginität der Maria Magdalena in der mittelalterlichen Literatur*, in «Mediaevistik», 18 (2005), p. 209-234. The salvation formula discussed here reached a peak in the 13th century after the institution of annual confession (1215, Innocent III, fourth Lateran Council) and the foundation of mendicant orders who preached this practice. Primary literature: JANSEN, *The Making of the Magdalen*, p. 199-246; EADEM, *Mary Magdalene and the Mendicants: The preaching of Penance in the late Middle Ages*, in «The Journal of Medieval History», 21 (1995), p. 1-25; J. THOMAS, *Mary Magdalen in the Thirteenth Century*, in «Michigan Academician», 30 (1998), p. 59-68. On the basis of the Gregorian fusion and the salvation formula mentioned above, Mary Magdalene became the subject of a lacrymology. She cries tears of love and tears of remorse. Her weeping is a 'condition of salvation' that leads to purification. It was thought that women had easier access to this condition because of their 'moist nature'. There is a certain amount of ambivalence concealed in this way of thinking: the Mary Magdalene–scheme of lacrymology makes of woman's tears a praiseworthy quality, but at the same time isolates her – even limits her – to this penitent (weeping) role if she wishes to have a pertinent role in soteriology. On the problems associated with this issue, see: B. NEWMANN, *From Virile Woman to Woman Christ: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature*, Philadelphia 1995), p.172-178; P. NAGY, *Le don des larmes aux moyen âge*, Paris 2000, p. 388-412; D. APOSTOLOS-CAPPADONA, *Pray with tears and your request will find hearing. On the Iconography of the*

Magdalene's tears, in *Holy Tears. Weeping and the Religious Imagination*, ed. K. PATTON-J. STRATTON HAWLEY, New York 2005, p. 201-228.

30) Published in *Marie Madeleine dans la mystique, les arts et les lettres.* Acts of the international Symposium (Avignon 1988, July 20-21-22), ed. E. DUPERRAY, Paris 1989, p. 33-47: "Qu'on se souvienne de cette pécheresse de l'évangile nommée Marie-Madeleine. Elle avait été remplie des sept vices et le seigneur en avait chassé sept démons. Elle avait lavé de ses larmes les pieds du Seigneur [...] C'est la même femme qui avait toujours suivi le Seigneur jusqu'à la crucifixion et à la sépulture et, qui, la première avant tous les apôtres et la vierge Marie elle-même, mérita de le voir avec les anges, ressuscité. Elle fut aussi la sœur de Marthe et de Lazare que le Seigneur avait ressuscité des morts le quatrième jour."

31) DESIDERIUS CONDURCENSIS, in *Epistulae Aevi Merowingici*, CCSL 117, p. 498.

32) BEDA VENERABILIS, *Martyrologia*, PL 94, col. 982. The standard work on the cult of the relic and the veneration of Mary Magdalene is still V. SAXER, *Le culte de Marie Madeleine en Occident des origines à la fin du moyen âge*, Paris 1959.

33) SAXER, *Le culte de Marie Madeleine*, p. 34.

34) When the relics of Mary Magdalene were rediscovered in Saint-Maximin in Baume in 1279-1280, an inscription was found which mentions the date 710 for the *furta sacra* of some of her bones to Vézelay. This inscription is now believed to be false; see SAXER, *Le culte de Marie Madeleine*, p. 37.

35) V. SAXER, *Le dossier vézelien de Marie Madeleine. Invention et translation des reliques en 1265-1267*, Bruxelles 1975, *passim*.

36) M. MEL EDMUNDS, *La Sainte Baume and the Iconography of Mary Magdalene*, in «Gazette des beaux arts», 114 (1989), p. 11-28.

37) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Ms. Lat. 9428, fol. 63v.

38) W. KOEHLER, *Die Karolingischen Miniaturen*, Berlin 1960, p. 143-162; IDEM, *Drogo Sakramentar*, Graz 1974. On Bishop Drogo: CHR. F.R. DE HAMEL, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*, Oxford 1986, p. 52; *Trésors carolingiens: livres manuscrits de Charlemagne à Charles le Chauve*, exhibition catalogue (Paris, Galerie Mazarine, 20 March-24 June 2007), ed. M.-P. LAFFITTE-CH. DENOËL, Paris 2007, p. 194-199.

39) There is also an initial miniature "D" on fol. 58 which illustrates the preceding passage, John 20:1-3. Here we see three women by the tomb and the angel who addresses them, and probably a *Noli me tangere* in the margin; TROTZIG, *Christus resurgens apparet Mariae Magdalena*, ill. 6a.

40) HASKINS, *Mary Magdalen. Myth and Metaphor*, p. 58-65, discusses such early Christian prototypes; on Monza, see p. 61, ill. 60.

41) R. MELZAK, *The Carolingian Ivory Carvings of the Later Metz Group* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, New York, 1983) p. 204.

42) This position probably continued to be exceptional because the diachronic direction of reading in Western Europe runs from left to right. In terms of chronological logic, Christ appears on the right because He is departing.

43) G. JEREMIAS, *Die Holztür der Basilika S. Sabina in Rom*, Tübingen 1980, p. 56, ill. 10; HASKINS, *Mary Magdalen. Myth and Metaphor*, p. 62, ill. 11.

44) Ezekiel describes the Tree of Life as a cosmic tree laden with countless fruit in the navel (*omphalos/nucleus*) of the world (31:3-10). As axis of the world, or *axis mundi*, the tree supports time and space, and is transferred by the early Fathers of the Church to Christ, the Messiah; Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-215) says that the Tree of Life is *logos*: the word become flesh: *Stromata*, ed. A. LE BOULLUEC, Vol. II, p. 72, note 2; S. J. RENO, *The Sacred Tree as an Early Christian Literary Symbol: A Phenomenological Study*, Saarbrücken 1978, p. 106.

45) Tertullian (ca. 160-ca. 240) formulates the opposition between the two trees in his *Adversus Iudaeos* as an idea fundamental to salvation. He finds that what we have lost through Adam is regained through the wood of the cross of Christ; RENO, *The Sacred Tree*, p. 165. The *lignum* of the cross must 'rewrite' the *lignum* of Genesis; G.T. ARMSTRONG, *The Cross in the Old Testament. According to Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem and the Cappodocian Father*, in *Theologia Crucis - Signum Crucis: Festschrift für Erich Dinklers zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. G. KLEIN, Tübingen 1978, p. 17-38, 17; G. HÖHLER, *Die Bäume des Lebens: Baumsymbole in den Kulturen der Menschheit*, Stuttgart 1985, p. 115; M. LEATHERS-P. GRIMLEY KUNTZ, *The Symbol of the Tree Interpreted in the Context of Other Symbols of Hierarchical Order, the Great Chain of Being and Jacob's Ladder*, in *Jacob's Ladder and the Tree of Life: Concepts of Hierarchy and the Great Chain of Being*, ed. M. LEATHERS-P. GRIMLEY KUNTZ, New York-Paris 1987, p. 319-334.

46) For the impact of Gregory the Great's Homilies on the Middle Ages and especially Carolingian times see P. ALLWIN DELEEUW, *Gregory the Great's 'Homilies on the Gospels' in the Early Middle Ages*, in «Studi medievali» 26 (1985), p. 855-869, 868; SAXER, *Le culte de Marie Madeleine*, p.33, 342.

47) H. HANSEL, *Die Maria-Magdalena-Legende: eine Quellen-Untersuchung*, Greifswald, 1937, *passim*; an edition of this *vita* can be found in J. MIRASHI, *A Vita Sanctae Mariae Magdalenae (BHL 5456) in an Eleventh-Century Manuscript*, in «Speculum», 18 (1943), p. 335-339.

48) The Anglo-Saxon world came into contact with the *Vita eremetica* and the legends that followed fairly early on; J. E. CROSS, *Mary Magdalen in the Old English Martyrology. The Earliest Extant 'narrat Josephus' Variant of her legend*, in «Speculum», 53 (1978), p. 16-25. The earliest depiction of Mary Magdalene in Western art is found on the famous Ruthwell cross from the early 8th century, which features a scene from the washing of feet at the home of Simon, as recorded in Luke 7. The inscription reads: + ATTUL[IT ALABA]STRUM UNGUENTI & STANS RETRO SECUS PEDES. EIUS LACRIMIS. COEPIT RIGARE. PEDES EIUS. & CAPILLIS. CAPITIS SUI TERGEBAT. The Ruthwell cross provides an example of the penitent, weeping Mary Magdalene as depicted from Gregory onward; E. O'CARRAGAIN, *Ritual and the Rood, Liturgical Images and the Old English Poems of the Dream of the Rood Tradition*, London 2005, p. 128-137, ill. 28.

49) Trier, Stadtbibliothek, codex 24, fol. 91; H. SCHIEL, *Codex Egberti der Stadtbibliothek Trier*, Basel 1960; F. J. RONIG, *Erläuterungen zu den Miniaturen des Egbert Codex*, in *Der Egbert Codex: das Leben Jesu: ein Höhepunkt der Buchmalerei vor 1000 Jahren*, ed. G. FRANZ, Stuttgart 2005, p. 78-188.

50) The composition is imitated in the *Perikopenbuch* of Henry IIII, Echternach, 1040 – Bremen, Staatsbibliothek, ms. 621; TROTZIG, *Christus resurgens apparet Mariae Magdalena*, ill. 10.

51) On this dynamic and its effect on *Noli me tangere* iconography from the 15th century onward, see: M. PRADO, *The Subject of Savoldo's* Magdalene, in «The Art Bulletin», 71 (1989), p. 67-91; K. KRÜGER, *Das Bild als Schleier des Unsichtbaren. Ästhetische Illusion in der Kunst der frühen Neuzeit in Italien*, Munich 2001, p. 104.

52) Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, CLM 4453, fol. 251; *Das Evangeliar Ottos III: CLM 4453 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, Frankfurt am Mainz,1978; K. SCHULMEYER, *Evangeliar Otto's III*, in *Europas Mitte um 1000*, ed. A. WIECZOREK-H.-M. HINZ, Stuttgart 2000, vol. I, p. 456-457.

53) In this instance, the winding sheet appears as a wheel with three intertwining segments. This shape makes a graphic connection to an intercultural archetype in the history of form – namely, that of the sun. "Die Andeutung einer Rotation, einer Bewegung, wahrscheinlich im Zusammenhang mit dem Ablauf auf der Sonnenbahn [...] Die Strahlung ist sowohl innerhalb wie ausserhalb der Kreise gezeichnet [...] In den meisten Sonnen-Symbolen kommt eine deutliche Betonung des Begriffs 'Mitte' zum Ausdruck, als Bestätigung eines sehr früh erwachten Gefühls für die zentrale Bedeutung der Sonne für alles Leben," from: A. FRUTIGER, *Zeichen, Symbole, Signete, Signale*, in «Der Mensch und seine Zeichen», 3 (1981), p. 72-74, image 6, p. 73. The wheel also implies the Trinity. By using this universal, symbolic form for the winding sheet, the miniaturist sought to add greater cosmic force to his depiction of the Son of Man's Resurrection.

54) J. BREMMER, *Walking, Standing, and Sitting in Ancient Greek Culture*, in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, ed. J. BREMMER-H. ROODENBURG, Ithaca (NY), 1993, p. 15-35; R. BALDWIN, *'Gates Pure and Shining and Serene': Mutual Gazing as an Amatory Motif in Western Literature and Art*, in «Renaissance and Reformation», 10 (1986), p. 23-49; R. CORMACK, *Painting the Soul: Icons, Death Masks, and Shrouds*, London 1997; *Icon and Word: the Power of Images in Byzantium: studies presented to Robin Cormack*, ed. A. EASTMOND-L. JAMES, Aldershot 2003.

55) *Sermo in Veneratione Sanctae Mariae Magdalenae*, PL 133, col. 713-721; V. SAXER, *Un manuscrit décembré du sermon d'Etudes de Cluny sur Ste Marie-Madeleine*, in «Scriptorium», 8 (1954), p. 119-123; D. IOGNA-PRAT, *La Madeleine du 'Sermo in veneratione sanctae Mariae Magdalenae' attribué à Odon de Cluny*, in «Mélanges de l'école française de Rome. Moyen Âge», 104 (1992), p. 37-79; IDEM, *'Bienheureuse polysémie': La Madeleine du* Sermo in veneratione Sanctae Mariae Magdalenae *attribué à Odon de Cluny (X^e siècle)*, in *Marie Madeleine dans la mystique*, p. 21-31.

56) J. SZÖVÉRFFY, *Peccatrix Quondam Femina. A Survey of the Mary Magdalen Hymns*, in «Traditio», 19 (1963), p. 79-146, esp. p. 86: the earliest hymns arose in the 10th and 11th centuries in Burgundy, Bourges and southern Germany (where our Ottonian manuscripts were also created); p. 92: the most important key words in the hymn are *peccatrix*, *collega apostolorum*, *soror apostolorum*, *meretrix impudica*, *Maria poenitens*, *sponsa*, *amica Dei*, *fons*.

57) K. YOUNG, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, Oxford 1933. The text in question is a dialogue (p. 202) *Iesum Nazarenum crucifixum, o caelicolae* ("Jesus, the Nazarene, the crucified, o angels"). *Non est hic, surrexit sicut praedixerat; ite, nuntiate quia surrexit de sepulchre* ("He is not here, He is risen, as He predicted; go and announce that He has risen from the grave"). The content is derived from Matthew 28:5-10, Mark 16:5-7 and Luke 24:4-6. The dialogue form is inspired by choir songs from contemporary liturgy (p. 203-204). The version in its original form is the text described above, which occurs in a manuscript in Sankt Gallen and dates to the middle of the 10th century (pp. 204-205). With thanks to Isabelle Vanden Hove.

58) IOGNA-PRAT, *La Madeleine du* 'Sermo in veneratione sanctae Mariae Magdalenae', p. 56; in the mass of July 22, one prays to be able to 'see' the majesty of Christ-Sol. The internal pain is necessary for achieving and disseminating personal salvation.

59) H. PAULHART, *Die Lebensbeschreibung der Kaiserin Adelheid von Abt Odilo von Cluny*, in *Festschrift zur Jahrhtausendfeier der Kaiserkrönung Ottos der Grossen*, Graz 1962 ['Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung', 20, 2].

60) W. BERSCHIN, *Die Taten des Abtes Witigowo von der Reichenau (985-997). Eine zeitgenössische Biographie von Purchart von der Reichenau*, Sigmaringen 1992.

61) For more on the particular artistic context of the Ottonian empire, see: A. EFFENBERGER, *Spätantike, karolingische und byzantinische Kostbarkeiten in den Schatzkammern ottonischer Hausklöster*, in *Otto der Grosse. Magdeburg und Europa*, exhibition catalogue (Magdeburg, Kulturhistorisches Museum, 2001, August 27 - December 2), ed. M. PUHLE, Mainz am Rhein 2001, vol. I, p. 149-166.

62) H. SCHRADE, *Zu dem* Noli me tangere *der Hildesheimer Bronzetür*, in «Westfalen», 39 (1961), p. 211-214; U. STORM, *Die Bronzetüren Bernwards zu Hildesheim* (unpublished dissertation, Berlin 1966); U. MENDE, *Die Bronzetüren des Mittelalters, 800-1200*, Munich 1983; M. BRANDT, *Bernward von Hildesheim und das Zeitalter der Ottonen*, Mainz am Rhein 1993, p. 337-351, 369-382.

63) Standard literature on typology includes: J.W. EARL, *Typology and Iconographic Style in Early Medieval Hagiography*, in «Typology and Medieval Literature», 8 (1975), p. 15-46; R.C. SUTHERLAND, *Theological Notes on the Origin of Types, Shadows of Things to Be*, in «Typology and Medieval Literature», 8 (1975), p. 1-14; L. KRETZENBACHER, *Wortbegründetes Typologie-Denken auf mittelalterlichen Bildwerken*, Munich 1983.

64) Clearly explained in W. TRONZO, *The Hildesheim Doors. An Iconographic Source and its Implications*, in «Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte», 46 (1983), p. 357-366.

65) According to A. COHEN and A. DERBES, *Bernward and Eve at Hildesheim*, in «Gesta», 60 (2001), p. 19-38, the scene refers in particular to Genesis 2:22: the Creation of Eve from Adam's rib. This would imply that the reclining Adam on the right is duplicated as a viewer of himself and the extraction of his rib.

66) *Proskynesis* is a frequently recurring motif in Byzantine art; see A. CUTLER, *Transfigurations: studies in the dynamics of Byzantine iconography*, University Park (PA.) 1975, p. 59-64.

67) On the central panel of the 10th-century ivory triptych from Harbaville (Paris, Louvre), a cross is duplicated in the form of two identical trees. The trees are surrounded by a vineyard: on the left, the vineyard bears flowers and fruit; on the right, it is barren. The crowns of the two trees meet at the intersection of the cross. This means that the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge are united in this synthetic cross. Gregory of Nyssa (335-394) therefore says that the cross is an *arbor mixtus*. GREGORY OF NYSSA, PL 44, col. 179; G. DUFOUR-KOWALSKA, *L'arbre de vie et la croix: essai sur l'imagination visionnaire*, with an introduction by J. HERSCH, Genève 1985, p. 64, ill. 18.

68) The eagle is a creature of the sun; see note #51; the eagle is also the attribute of the evangelist John. On the symbolism of the eagle see M. LURKER, *Adler*, in *Wörterbuch der Symbolik*, Stuttgart 1991, p. 6-7; L. WEIRHAHN-STAUCH, *Adler*, LCI 1, cols. 70-76; Schiller III, cols. 120-129.

69) A. WORM, *Steine und Fu spuren Christi auf dem Ölberg. Zu zwei ungewöhnlichen Motiven bei Darstellungen der Himmelfahrt Christi*, in «Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte», 66 (2003), p. 297-320.

70) R. BAROCCINI, *Una capsella marmorea cristiana rinvenuta in Ravenna*, in «Felix Ravenna», 2 (1930), p. 21-33, esp. p. 21.

71) When Christ assumes this pose in Carolingian models, it is exclusively in the context of the Assumption – for example, on the ivory by Master Liuthard (mid 9th century) now in Weimar. The legs and feet on the ivory are depicted as if in a vacuum, and Christ is located in the untouchable sacrality of the mandorla; see also H. SCHRADE, *Zu dem Noli me tangere der Hildesheimer Bronzetür*, p. 213, ill. 76.

72) On the antithetical position of Eve, see: E. GULDAN, *Eva und Maria. Eine Antithese als Bildmotiv*, Graz 1966, p. 13-20.

73) Rafanelli does not mention the building; Schrade refers to the Holy Sepulchre (*loc. cit.*).

74) Ephraim (306-337) calls the mystery of the Resurrection the Last Now; H. SCHRADE, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst. Die Sinngehalte und Gestaltungsformen: 1. Die Auferstehung Christi*, Berlin 1932, p. 41; B. BAERT, *Imagining the Mystery: The Resurrection and the Visual Medium During the Middle Ages*, in *Resurrection in the New Testament: Festschrift J. Lambrecht*, ed. R. BIERINGER-V. KOPERSKI-B. LATAIRE, Leuven 2002, p. 483-506.

75) Hildesheim, Domschat, cod. 18, fol. 75v.

76) M. BRANDT, *Das kostbare Evangeliar des Heiligen Bernward*, Munich 1993; IDEM, *Bernward von Hildesheim*, p. 191-200.

77) R. DESHMAN, *Another Look at the Disappearing Christ. Corporeal and Spiritual Vision in Early Medieval Images*, in «The Art Bulletin» 79 (1997), p. 518-546, esp. p. 537: «The mandorla makes it clear that the Magdalene spiritually sees Christ's divinity and therefore is able to touch him». This line of reasoning is taken over by RAFANELLI, *The Ambiguity of Touch*, p. 101.

78) W. WEBER, *Symbolik in der abendländischen und byzantinische Kunst. Von Sinn und Gestalt der Aureole*, Basel 1981, p. 373-381, with illustrations.

79) See S. SCHROER-TH. STAUBLI, *Die Körpersymbolik der Bibel*, Gütersloh 2005, p. 150-152.

80) The mandorla is an anachronism used in order to lend clarity for the viewer's sake. The mandorla occurs in Assumption iconography and is either a foreshadowing in the iconography of the Resurrection or an indication

that the miniaturist and his atelier used a Christ prototype from the Assumption; see WEBER, *Symbolik in der abendländischen und byzantinische Kunst*, p. 132, image 58 who uses the Evangelary of the Abbey of Poussay near Epinal (ca. 980) as an example, in this instance, of a frontally depicted Christ steps away to the right.

81) The cultural and intellectual impact of the Greek-Byzantine wife of Otto II and mother of Otto III, Empress Theophanu (955-991), has received increasing attention since the 1990s and is now the subject of active research. A. DAVIDS, *The Empress Theophano. Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, Cambridge 1995; L. KÖRNTGEN, *Starke Frauen: Edith-Adelheid-Theophanu*, in *Otto der Grosse*, p. 119-132. Rafanelli goes even a step further; she explains the innovative design of Otto's *Noli me tangere* on the basis of the specifically feminine sphere of influence at the Ottonian court. KÖRNTGEN, *Starke Frauen*, p. 104-106; RAFANELLI, *The Ambiguity of Touch*, p. 104-106. For the influence of Theophanu and Adelaide on the Imperial court see W. WIXOM, *Byzantine Art and the Latin West*, in *The Glory of Byzantium. Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-1261*, ed. H. EVANS-W. WIXOM, exhibition catalogue (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997, March 11-July 6), New York 1997, p. 435; H. MAYR-HARTING, *Ottonian Book Illumination. An Historical Study*, London 1991, vol. I, p. 65 and F. TSCHAN, *Saint Bernward of Hildesheim*, Notre Dame (IN.) 1951, vol. I, p. 55. The Ottonian period marked a time of incredible achievement for women in general. See M. CAVINESS, *Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons?*, in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. J.H. MCCASH, Athens (GA.) 1996, p. 105-124; W. CHADWICK, *Women, Art, and Society*, London 1990, p. 44. Otto's Mary Magdalene may attest to a feminine self-consciousness, may represent a sort of replacement for the Empress. According to this line of reasoning, the Mary Magdalene of the *Noli me tangere* serves as the model *par excellence* for the mission of the women of the Ottonian dynasty. This mission was considered a direct assignment from God. The dominion of God was after all thought to be reflected by the dominion of the emperors. Did Mary Magdalene constitute a mirror for the Ottonian woman, as Christ did for the Ottonian men?

82) In their article *Bernward and Eve at Hildesheim*, Adam Cohen and Anne Derbes interpret the feminine position in the program of the bronze doors according to a misogynistic model. Bishop Bernward of Hildesheim is said to have expressed his low opinion of women in these doors after a hostile encounter with Sophia (975-1039), abbess of the cloister of Gandersheim, daughter of Emperor Otto II and Theophanu, sister of Otto III. See COHEN-DERBES, *Bernward and Eve at Hildesheim*, p. 19-38, *passim*.

83) With thanks to DUPONT-DEPRIL, *Marie-Madeleine et Jean 20,17*, p. 159-182. On Petrus Chrysologus, see *Sermo* 76, 2-3 in G. BANTERLE, *Opere di San Pietro Crisologo: sermoni*, Milano 1996-1997), p. 111-115. On Augustine and Jerome, respectively, see AUGUSTINE, *In epistulam Iohannis ad Parthos tractatus decem*, PL 35, cols. 1977-2002, esp. col. 1998, and HIERONYMUS, *Epistulae LXXI-CXX*, Wien 1996, p. 470-515, [col.] esp. p. 481-488.

84) See the surveys listed in note #3. See also A. TROTZIG, *The* Noli me tangere-*Motif on the South Portal of Notre Dame d'Etampes*, in «Icon to Cartoon», 16 (1995), p. 295-306.

85) Under the impetus of the Vézelay cult, the *Vita eremetica* was reconsidered in the context of her *Vita apostolica* from the 11th century onward. In the *Vita apostolica*, it is said that Mary Magdalene landed in Marseille, converted the people of Provence, and withdrew into the wilderness of Sainte-Baume as a hermit. She died there and was buried at Saint-Maximin, where her primary relic is still preserved; G. LOBRICHON, *Le dossier magdalénien, aux XI-XII^e siècle*, in «Mélanges de l'école française de Rome. Moyen Âge», 104 (1992), p. 163-180, with an edition of this *Vita* on pp. 164-169.

86) On the complex of legends around Saint-Maximin and Sainte-Baume, see the study included in J. Sclafer's edition of J. GOBI, *Miracles de Sainte Marie-Madeleine*, Paris 1996.

87) According to L. DUCHESNE, *La légende de Sainte Marie-Madeleine*, in «Annales du Midi», 5 (1893), p. 1-33.

88) The relics of Mary Magdalene have a capricious history. Around 1200, La Nunziatella mentions a stone from the grotto outside Rome where she did penance. From the 11th century onward, La Trinité de Vendôme was known for its possession of the "sainte larme" of Christ, a tear which the angels are said to have given to Mary Magdalene after the raising of Lazarus. The sarcophagus of Mary Magdalene at Saint-Maximin was opened on December 9, 1279. According to a contemporary observer, the Dominican Bernardo Gui, a sweet odour emerged and it was found that a green twig had sprouted from the saint's tongue; JANSEN, *The Making of the Magdalen*, p. 35-36, p. 328-332; SAXER, *Le culte de Marie Madeleine*, *passim*.

89) Extensively discussed in JANSEN, *The Making of the Magdalen*, chapter 11, p. 307-332.

90) M. DICKMAN ORTH, *The Magdalene Shrine of La Sainte-Baume in 1516. A Series of Miniatures by Godefroy le Batabe (B.N. Ms. Fr. 24.955)*, in «Gazette des beaux-arts», 98 (1981), p. 209; RAFANELLI, *The Ambiguity of Touch*, p. 108-109.

91) JOHN CALVIN, *Admonition, in which it is shown how advantageous it would be for Christendom that the bodies and relics of Saints were reduced to a kind of inventory*, in ed. H. BEVERIDGE, *Tracts Relating to the Reformation*, Edinburgh 1844, vol. I, p. 294, says that this relic was venerated as a sort of god which had descended from heaven, but that on closer inspection it was clear that the skin was false. Calvin also notes that, when the relic was discussed in the vernacular, it was said that the skin, according to the author just a fragment, showed the imprint of Christ's fingers when he became angry at Mary Magdalene's attempt to touch Him (p. 330).